

## **FLEXIBLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION RESOURCES**

Act 44, an act relating to making miscellaneous amendments to education law and passed by the Vermont Legislature in 2009, requires in Section 39 the educational support team for each school to “determine which enrolled students require additional assistance to be successful in school or to complete secondary school....” It further requires the development of “an individualized strategy, in collaboration with the student’s parents or legal guardian whenever possible, to assist the identified student to succeed in school and to complete his or her secondary education.” The following examples of “flexible program components” are offered in Act 44, Section 45:

- the assignment of one or more adults from within the school community to provide continuity to the student;
- the development of a personalized education plan or strategy by the student, the assigned adult or adults or another representative of the district, and the student’s parents or legal guardian;
- the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills through applied or work-based learning opportunities;
- the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment courses with tutorial support provided as needed; and
- assessments that allow the student to demonstrate proficiency by applying his or her knowledge and skills to tasks that are of interest to that student.

These examples are not offered as requirements, nor are they intended to place a limit on the tools available. It is expected that each school will design its own responses to the needs of its students. The educational support team at each school will be responsible for reporting to the Commissioner of Education “on the ways in which the educational support system has addressed the needs of students who require additional assistance in order to succeed....”

Here are a few useful links, with brief annotation, that may help in the development of a school’s toolkit of flexible pathways to graduation.

**A. Accommodations and Instructional Strategies That Can Help Students**

This a 2009 publication of the Vermont Department of Education (VTDOE).

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm\\_ess/educ\\_accommodations\\_strategies.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_ess/educ_accommodations_strategies.pdf)

**B. Achieving Graduation For All: a Governor’s Guide to Dropout Prevention and Recovery**

This is a 2009 publication of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices.

<http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0910ACHIEVINGGRADUATION.PDF>

**C. Chasing the High School Graduation Rate: Getting the Data We Need and Using It Right**

This is a 2009 publication of the Educational Testing Service.

<http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICCHASING.pdf>

**D. Cooperative Education Web Site Resources**

This list of resources was prepared by the Career and Technical Education consultants at the Vermont Department of Education for the purpose of assisting in the development of cooperative education experiences.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm\\_teched/programs/cooperative\\_education/resources.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm_teched/programs/cooperative_education/resources.pdf)

**E. Core Principles of High-Quality Local Assessment Systems: A Publication Providing Technical Assistance to Vermont Schools As They Engage in the Process of Comprehensive Local Assessment Planning**

This is a document of the VTDOE published in 2006.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm\\_curriculum/local\\_assessment/core\\_principles\\_08.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm_curriculum/local_assessment/core_principles_08.pdf)

**F. Developing Early Literacy: A Scientific Synthesis of Early Literacy Development and Implications for Intervention**

This is a report of the National Early Literacy Panel, sponsored by the National Institute for Literacy.

<http://www.nifl.gov/publications/pdf/NELPSummary.pdf>

**G. Equity & Excellence Action Planning Guide**

This 1998 VTDOE publication is designed to help schools improve their action planning efforts. [http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pubs/apg/apg\\_00\\_cover\\_toc.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pubs/apg/apg_00_cover_toc.pdf)

**H. Formative Assessment Project (FAP) Overview**

This VTDOE document, published in 2009, provides an overview of FAP, the purpose of which is to develop teachers' capacity to frequently monitor the learning of all students and adjust instruction to better meet their needs.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm\\_assessment/fapp/overview\\_012709.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm_assessment/fapp/overview_012709.pdf)

**I. Grad Nation: A Guidebook to Help Communities Tackle the Dropout Crisis**

This 2009 publication was commissioned by America's Promise Alliance.

<http://www.americaspromise.org/~media/Files/Our%20Work/Dropout%20Prevention/Grad%20Nation%20Guidebook%20052809.ashx>

**J. High Schools on the Move: Renewing Vermont's Commitment to Quality Secondary Education**

This is a 2002 publication of the VTDOE that was intended to be a catalyst for high school renewal. It remains a very useful resource.

<http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pubs/hsom/hsom.pdf>

**K. Middle School Is Not A Building: Educating Vermont's Young Adolescents in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

This 2009 publication from the Vermont Middle Grades Task Force, endorsed by the Vermont DOE, provides guidance toward achieving ten essential goals.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm\\_elem\\_middle/educ\\_middle\\_school\\_is\\_not\\_a\\_building.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdffdoc/pgm_elem_middle/educ_middle_school_is_not_a_building.pdf)

**L. Roots of Success: Effective Practices In Vermont Schools**

This 2009 VTDOE publication provides state-specific information, aligned to national research, on how to improve outcomes for students, identifying “Eight Characteristics of Effective Schools”.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pubs/educ\\_pub\\_effective\\_practices10.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pubs/educ_pub_effective_practices10.pdf)

**M. Self-Assessment and Planning Guide for High-Quality Local Assessment Systems**

This VTDOE document provides technical assistance to schools as they engage in the process of comprehensive local assessment planning.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm\\_curriculum/local\\_assessment/planning\\_guide\\_092608.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_curriculum/local_assessment/planning_guide_092608.pdf)

**N. The Forgotten Middle: Ensuring that All Students are on Target for College and Career Readiness Before High School**

This a 2008 publication of ACT.

<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ForgottenMiddle.pdf>

**O. Vermont Positive Behavior Supports: Bringing Out the BEST in All of Us**

This is a PowerPoint presentation prepared by VTDOE staff. PBS is a proactive, school-wide, systems approach to improving social and academic competence for all students.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm\\_ess/pbs/overview\\_vermont.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_ess/pbs/overview_vermont.pdf)

**P. Vermont Secondary Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: ensuring Each Student Can succeed in College, Career and Citizenship**

This is a 2009 document from the VTDOE that identifies a set of five strategies in alignment with the Transformation vision of the State Board of Education.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/dept/transformation/secondary\\_schools\\_081908.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/dept/transformation/secondary_schools_081908.pdf)

**Additional Web Sites of Interest:**

ACT (<http://www.act.org>)

Alliance for Excellent Education (<http://www.all4ed.org>)

America’s Promise Alliance (<http://www.americaspromise.org>)

Educational Testing Service (<http://www.ets.org>)

National Governors Association (<http://www.nga.org>)

National Institute for Literacy (<http://www.nifl.gov>)

National Middle School Association (<http://www.nmsa.org>)

Vermont Association for Middle Level Education (<http://www.vamle.org>)

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (<http://www.vsac.org>)